

BARNET HIV SURVEY

A survey of 100 Barnet teenagers carried out by the AIDS Education Unit has shown that most of them have a good knowledge of how you can and can't get HIV. The vast majority felt that it is possible to protect yourself from AIDS. Despite this, half of those reporting penetrative intercourse did not use a condom.

The survey was carried out in spring this year at five local youth clubs. The average age of the participants was 15, divided equally between the sexes. They were each given a questionnaire about HIV/AIDS, asking about their knowledge, attitudes and behaviour.

KNOWLEDGE

Nearly all the participants knew that you can't get HIV/AIDS from "smoking drugs" (93%) or from kissing (98%). 98% also knew that sex is safer if you use a condom. However, 46% of participants wrongly believed that "sex is safer if you know your partner well". "Knowing your partner well", does not guarantee that your partner has not been exposed to risk of HIV infection. In addition 33% answered yes to the question "sex is safer if you use the pill", while 7% thought that "sex is safer if you have anal sex" (it needs to be remembered though that for teenagers "safer sex" may be understood as being as much about avoiding pregnancy as about HIV). Unit co-ordinator Martin Dockrell commented: "Some of these misconceptions are positively dangerous. It seems to me that this underscores the need for honest and explicit information for young people".

ATTITUDES

Although the participants had fairly accurate knowledge, their attitudes towards AIDS were not as positive. 64% of

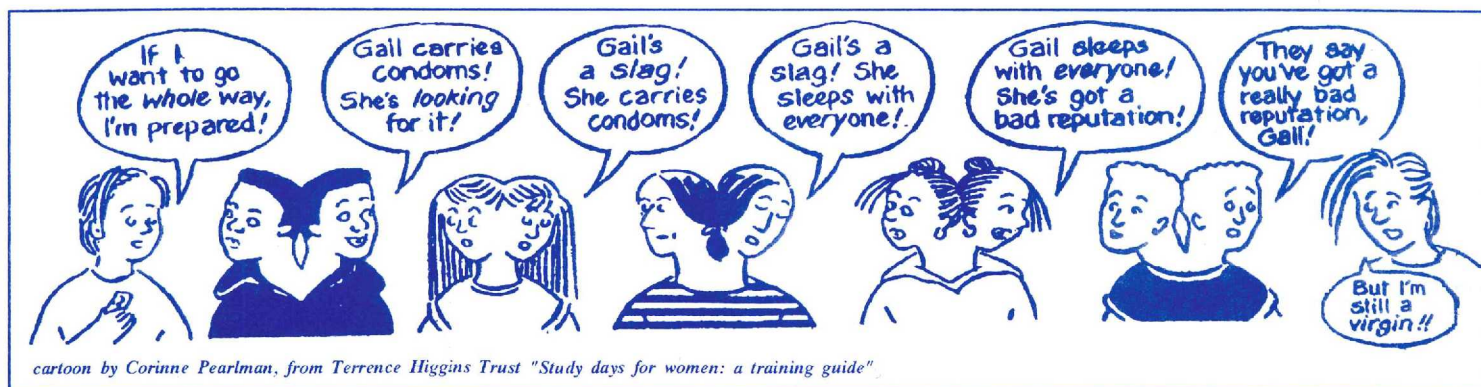
participants agreed or strongly agreed that "gay men and drug users only have themselves to blame". This was despite the fact that the participants were aware that HIV is not just a disease of gay men and drug users: 97% were aware that you can contract HIV as a result of "sex between a man and a woman". There seemed some confusion about what they would do if they knew someone with AIDS. A minority (17%) replied they would "beat them up". Only 4% said they would "be more friendly". (12% replied "keep away", 34% replied "don't know", 33% replied "act the same").

BEHAVIOUR

74% of the sample reported that they had not had sex in the last two weeks. Of those who had, half reported that they had not used a condom, despite being aware that sex is safer using a condom. This may be partly because they did not perceive themselves as being at risk. Equal percentages of subjects (39% and 37%) agreed and disagreed with the statement: "people like me are at risk from AIDS".

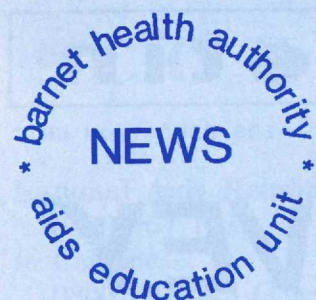
CONCLUSION

The results of this survey confirm other research findings: that a gap exists between young people's fairly accurate knowledge of HIV transmission and their own sexual activity. Wendy Middleton, who analyzed the survey results, said, "this shows that more emphasis needs to be put on empowering young people to put their own knowledge into practice". The AIDS Education Unit is launching a new initiative in this area: a course in **Working with clients towards safer sex**. It is hoped that youth workers, teachers, and others working with young people will attend (contact Wendy Middleton for an application form on 081-905 9779).



Inside this issue of the Barnet AIDS Bulletin:

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- * Jewish AIDS Trust * contact numbers *



For World AIDS Day, the AEU organised a conference (see right), produced a **Fact Pack for Working with Young People**, and issued a press release based on our survey of **Barnet Youth Clubs** (see front page). We also supplied materials for displays at Family Planning Clinics and at Hendon College, and for an assembly at Queen Elizabeth Girls' School.

Together with Barnet Voluntary Services Council, the AEU is planning a conference on 18 April 1990 on **AIDS and the Voluntary Sector**. Issues to be covered should include HIV & AIDS awareness, inter-agency co-operation and funding for voluntary organisations working on HIV & AIDS. It is hoped that a wide range of local voluntary organisations will participate. For further information contact Elaine Moss (Barnet VSC), 081 346 9723.

The AEU will be taking part in a **Staff Health Fair** in January and February. Along with the Health Promotion Department, Occupational Health, Physiotherapists, and Dietitians, we will be putting on a display in the canteens of the main Barnet Health Authority hospitals. The dates are as follows:

30 January- Barnet General,
13 February- Edgware General,
27 February- Napsbury,
(all from 12-2pm).

A leaflet has been produced by the AEU for distribution by Family Planning Clinics. **HIV- Could you be at risk?** aims to help people assess whether their activities put them at risk of contracting the HIV-Virus.

The AEU has a library of books, journals, videos and leaflets that can be used by anyone. Among the recent additions to our collection is the new **THI booklet HIV & AIDS: Information for Women**. If you would like any copies, or would like to look at the rest of our materials, please get in touch.

World AIDS Day Conference *AIDS in the 90s*

For the third consecutive year the AIDS Education Unit marked World AIDS DAY with a conference. **AIDS in the 90s** was held at Edgware General Hospital on 28 November and was a great success, with all eighty available places being taken up. This year's World AIDS Day theme of **Women and AIDS** was covered by several of the speakers, and a range of other issues were also addressed.

Dr Philip Slayen (Consultant in Public Health Medicine, Barnet Health Authority) opened the conference with a brief overview of the international HIV/AIDS situation. He stressed the importance of what he described as "avoiding CID- Complacency, Ignorance and Denial".

Dr Andrew Heley from **FACTS (Foundation for AIDS Counselling, Treatment and Support)** then talked about treatments for the various medical problems associated with HIV and AIDS. In particular he emphasised treatment in the community, as promoted by **FACTS**. **FACTS** pioneered the testing of aerosol pentamidine as a preventive treatment for Pneumocystis Carinii Pneumonia in Britain, and is continuing work in this area. Dr Heley remarked that he now prefers to prescribe pentamidine in tablet form, as this way the drug can reach the whole lung via the blood stream, whereas when inhaled in steam it may be concentrated at the bottom of the lung. Another initiative taken by **FACTS** has involved giving people blood transfusions in their own homes; these transfusions are necessary because people may develop anaemia as a side effect of treatment with zidovudine (AZT).

Janet Holland outlined the work of **Women, Risk and AIDS Project**, which is carrying out research into sexual practices, beliefs and understanding amongst young women. She particularly focused on the difficulties young women face in negotiating safer sex. Women are at risk because inadequate sex education doesn't equip them with the language to discuss sexuality. What sex education young women do get tends to focus on biology, rather than the social, emotional and other issues surrounding sexuality. As one respondent in the **WRAP** survey put it: "It was more about how sperm swim".

Unequal power relations within relationships may further undermine young women's ability to negotiate over sexuality. One woman in the **WRAP** survey had been gang-raped, while

others had been pressurised into penetrative sex in various ways. Describing her own experiences one woman said: "I wasn't forced but I didn't want to". Janet concluded that work needs to be done on legitimising non-penetrative sex, and more generally on empowering young women to take control of their own sexuality.

After lunch, Corinne Harris performed the play **Bondage**, by Davis Hines. She played the character of Liz, a prostitute working around Kings Cross, facing the dilemma of being offered desperately needed cash for sex without a condom. Later Corinne discussed some of the issues arising from the play in a workshop.

Positively Women, a support group for women with HIV and AIDS, were represented by Jane. She spoke about her own experience of living with HIV as well as the work of the group, which was formed in response to the lack of support available for HIV-positive women. Many women had had bad experiences as a result of the ignorance surrounding HIV. For instance when Jane herself was diagnosed as HIV-positive six years ago she was told that she had eighteen months to live and (also wrongly) that she shouldn't kiss or bathe with her daughter.

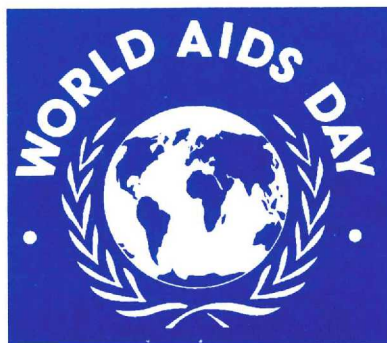
Other workshops were held on **Counselling and HIV**, **HIV Awareness**, **Eroticising Safer Sex**- in which Martin Dockrell introduced the participants to the wonders of bananas and cointreau- and **Risk Reduction in the Drug Field**.

addresses:

FACTS, 16 Fairfield Road, Crouch End, London N8 9HG. (tel: 081 340 6083)

WRAP, c/o Caroline Ramazanoglu, Department of Sociology, Goldsmith's College, New Cross, London SE14 6NW. (tel: 081 692 7171, ext. 2138)

Positively Women, 5 Sebastien Street, London EC1V 0HE (tel: 071 490 5515, client services, or 071 490 5501, administration).



Pharmacy-based needle exchange

Preventing the spread of HIV disease among injecting drug users in Barnet is an important part of the work of Drug Concern (Barnet Drug and Alcohol Service). In particular this involves two workers increasing the availability of sterile injecting equipment and providing harm reduction advice to injecting drug users. Free packs of needles and syringes, condoms and health care information are available from the pharmacies listed below.

It is recognised that health workers and other professionals do come into contact with drug users and it is important that information relating to clean equipment and injecting practices is available. For more information please contact Chris Hughes or Emma Cochrane at Drug Concern (Barnet) on 081-200 9535/9575.

A. Sood
(T/a Regent Chemists)
Saalcombe Gardens
Mill Hill NW7 2NU
081-906 36003

Mr Patel
641 Watford Way
Mill Hill NW7 3JR
081-959 3520

Adrian Korsner
(T/a Adrian Russell
Chemists)
158 Ballards Lane
Finchley N3 2PA
081-346 3160

Derek Clarkes
85 Station Road
Edgware HA8
081-952 2061

Mrs Z. Dewji
(T/a Seasonwell Ltd)
193 The Broadway
West Hendon NW9
7DD
081-952 2061

Dilip Maroo
(T/a Dils Chemist)
1354 High Road
Whetstone N20 9HJ
081-446 6604

N. Maini
(T/a Wilkinsons
Chemists)
190 High street
Barnet EN5 5SZ
081-449 6159

E. Gaan
(T/a Portland Pharmacy)
25 Leeming Road
Borehamwood
Hertsmere WD6 4EB
081-953 5290

NEW ENB COURSE

The English National Board for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting has developed a new certificate course for those who have already completed the ENB Course 934 "the care and management of people with AIDS and HIV-related conditions".

The new course (number 280)- "modular course on care provision for people with HIV-infection and AIDS"- is aimed at practitioners who have significant responsibility in relation to HIV/AIDS. It will consist of three modules: clinical practice issues, education and training, and planning, establishing and evaluating services. Completion of two of which will enable the nurse, midwife or health visitor to receive the certificate.

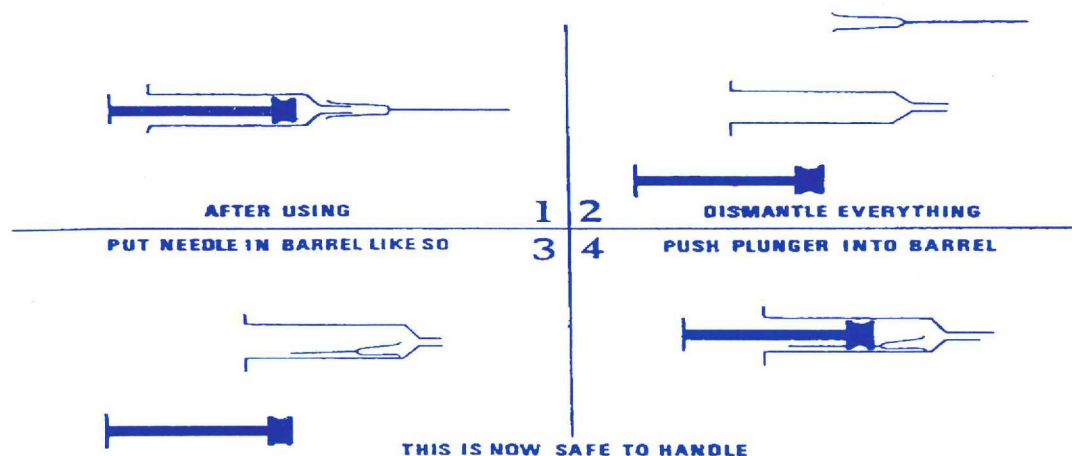
Details of ENB courses are available from: ENB Resource & Careers Services- 0742 551064/5. See also "AIDS-taking the education initiative" by Ian Hicken (ENB project officer, HIV/AIDS education) in *Nursing Times*, September 12 1990, 83(37), p.32-3.

PETS FOR PWAs

The Assisi Community, a voluntary organisation which finds good homes for unwanted and neglected dogs and cats, is offering a special service to people with HIV or AIDS who would like to keep pets. If somebody has to go into hospital or is otherwise unable to look after a pet supplied by the Assisi Community, the group will look after it for them, including paying any vet's bills.

The organisation has already supplied pets to a number of people using the Landmark Centre in South London. If you know of anybody who would like to provide a home for a pet, with the back-up offered by the Assisi Community, contact: Ros Sinclair, 5 Booth House, Tulse Hill Estate, London SW2 2ES.

needle and syringe safe disposal for 2ml or 5ml (this should not be done with 1ml as the needle can pierce the barrel)



Barnet Drug & Alcohol Service

Woodlands, Colindale Hospital, Colindale Avenue, NW9 5HG
telephone: 081 200 9525/9575

WRITE FOR BAB

If you are doing any work around HIV or AIDS, or if you have any particular views on this area, why not write an article for the Barnet AIDS Bulletin? Contact the editor, Neil Orr, on 081-905 9779.



CONTACTS

National Aids Helpline

0800 567 123

In Cantonese:

0800 282 445 (Tues eves)

In Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi, Gujarati and Bengali:

0800 245445 (Weds eves)

Afro-Caribbean service:

0800 567 123 (Fri eves)

Terrence Higgins Trust

071 831 0330

Helpline:

071 242 1010 (3-10pm daily)

Legal line, staffed by volunteer lawyers:

071 405 2381 (7-10pm Weds)

Body Positive (for people with HIV)

071 373 9124 (7-10pm daily)

071 483 1418 (Joe, North London)

Frontliners (for people with AIDS)

071 430 1199 (national office)

081 809 1454 (North London, based at St Anne's, Haringey)

Blackliners (for black communities)

081 673 1695

Gay Bereavement Project

081 455 8894

Citizens Advice Bureaux

East Barnet 081 441 2384

Edgware 081 959 0915

Hendon 081 203 5801

Grahame Pk 081 205 4141

West Hendon 081 202 5177

Relate (relationship counselling)

081 445 9549

Barnet Drug & Alcohol Service

081 200 9525

Mobile Needle Exchange

0860 361133

Samaritans (North West London)

081 459 8585

JEWISH AIDS TRUST

The Jewish AIDS Trust has appointed Mr Ian Mandleberg as its administrator, to be based in an office here at the AIDS Education Unit. The Trust is a registered charity established in 1988 to provide AIDS-related education, counselling and support within the Jewish community. Mr Mandleberg is currently the Trust's only paid officer, and his post has been funded for one year by a grant from Barnet Health Authority.

A clinical psychologist and psychotherapist by training, Mr Mandleberg has worked in the National Health Service, and has also held research posts at Edinburgh, Glasgow and New York Universities. He has been actively involved in AIDS-related work for over three years and, as a member of the Terrence Higgins Trust's counselling team, he was responsible for the initiation and development of its HIV/AIDS Counselling training programme.

In accordance with the aims and objectives of the Jewish AIDS Trust, he plans in the coming months to recruit and train a team of volunteers who will offer both telephone and face-to-face advice, information and counselling, and to promote a range of AIDS awareness programmes aimed at teachers, social workers, youth workers, medical and paramedical personnel, rabbis, and other members of the Jewish community, including Jewish lesbians and gays. He hopes to develop strong working relationships not only with Jewish community organisations, but also with other statutory and voluntary agencies active in the HIV/AIDS field.

Jewish AIDS Trust- 081 200 0369 (address as below).

**Barnet Health Authority AIDS Education Unit,
Vaughan M Williams HIV Education Centre,
Colindale Hospital, Colindale Avenue,
London NW9 5GH**

**tel: 081-905-9779,
or internal ext. 3539**

**Coordinator: Martin Dockrell
Counselling: Jonathan Neale
Training: Ugo Okoli, David King
Administration: Wendy Middleton
Information Officer: Neil Orr**